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**John Fetzer in the 1970s:
Les Initiates, Ken Killick, and Their Influences on John Fetzer's Spiritual Journey**

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The 1970s, when John was also in his '70s, was a decade of all-out metaphysical exploration by John Fetzer. One important thread from this decade was John Fetzer's involvement with his late 1970s psychic/spiritual advisor, Ken Killick, which led directly to the hiring of the Fetzer Foundation's first two 1980s-era leaders, Chuck Spence and Lloyd Swierenga, as well as to the attaining of legal church status by Inner Light Ministries. It's a 'long and winding story,' and it starts with a man named Jim Keating.

Around 1972, John Fetzer met and got to know Mr. Keating, who at the time was teaching at Nazareth College (run by the Roman Catholic Sisters of Saint Joseph) on Gull Road in Kalamazoo. John had casual and friendly contact with Keating throughout the '70s and at least through 1980. Keating isn't a particularly important influence on Fetzer's spiritual journey in a direct sense—except that he happened to be the person through whom John met Killick, Swierenga, Spence, as well as early-'80s 'Monday Night Group' member Cleora Daily. Keating was also instrumental in putting together and participating in the mid-'70s *Course in Miracles* group that met in John's office at that time. (And Keating was on the Fetzer Foundation Board in the '70s, although that was when the board only existed 'on paper' but never actually met, etc.)

So ... here's the story of these personages. Most of what follows comes from 2011 interviews Jim Keating did with me, Tom Beaver, and Larry Massie (a local historian who was hired by the Trust at the time to do a series of interviews).

Jim Keating was teaching at Nazareth college in the late '60s when, in response to students' request, he started an informal non-credit Sunday night class on, Keating told us, "ESP and séances and meditation, all these kinds of things" (ah, the '60s!). The father of one of the students in this class told Keating, "Oh this is nothing, what you're doing ... I have a brother who's doing astral projecting, and he's in Canada, and he could come down and teach us." This brother was named Gaston, and, Keating said, "Gaston was the head of the [Quebec Canadian mystical group] Les Initiates." And as far as the astral projection goes, "They (the Les Initiates people, including Gaston) had learned it from a man named Ken Killick." And, Keating added, "We found out later that a lot of what [Gaston was] telling us [he] had learned from Ken. He [Killick] was like their spiritual advisor on these things. And so he [Gaston] came down and he taught us [as a separate class, outside the college setting and not associated with Nazareth]. And we had a group of maybe eight people or so; and he had us do a lot of deep meditative stuff (including astral travel) ... for about two years we did that." Keating went on to say that the astral traveling lessons were successful and profoundly changed his life.

After a year or two of teaching his non-credit Sunday class at Nazareth, Keating started teaching another course there: "We called it 'Exploring Human Potential.' And basically it was an

evening class open to the community ... [and] then the second year we got more daring and we called it 'Introduction to Psychic Studies'."

By now the year was 1972, when John Fetzer sent letters on behalf of his fledgling Fetzer Foundation to various colleges and universities around the world inquiring regarding their interest in parapsychology. His enquiries went as far away as Europe, but there were local queries as well. Keating stated,

John Fetzer sent a letter to the colleges—to Nazareth, to Western Michigan University, and to Kalamazoo College. ... And what he was asking was if there's anybody on the faculty who was interested in these kinds of areas ... I had been doing those parlor groups and then the classes. So Sister Mary Bader, the head of Nazareth college, called me in and showed me the letter. And John [Fetzer] called a meeting. I don't remember where it was, if we met at his office—I think so. And there [in attendance] was Dick Williams from Western, who was very much into biofeedback at the time and I believe he still is. [Prof. Williams did regular biofeedback sessions with John Fetzer right through the mid 1980s]. ... From that time on he [Fetzer] and I struck up a friendship. ... I had a lot of friends and a lot of people that were talking about this, and I started to introduce him to them. And, I introduced him to Gaston. Unfortunately he [Gaston] made a pitch for money within 20 minutes, half an hour, which I didn't see coming. I didn't know they were going to do that..."

Asking for money was the quickest way to 'turn John off,' so that was that, as far as Fetzer directly being involved with Les Initiates—but that isn't the end of that story.

By 1974 Keating and Fetzer were talking about a collaboration between the Fetzer Foundation and Nazareth. Keating said, "The proposal ... I was writing for him in '74 was [for Nazareth] to collect data, to like be an information source to him to do research and to do education. So we were going to be like an educational source." Nazareth actually received a very small Fetzer Foundation grant in 1974 (\$500) for "Seminars on a search between science and metaphysics." But then a more orthodox administration took over at Nazareth, and these metaphysical things quickly petered out there. Keating told us he was consequently 'out' at Nazareth as well, but that that did not end his relationship with John: "I left Nazareth at the end of '74, but I still kept meeting with John after that."

Keating was listed as a Fetzer Foundation board member in the 1974 Annual Meeting minutes (a meeting which took place only on paper). This was just a year after the Fetzer Foundation made supporting research in parapsychology, its stated mission. And by later in 1975, John brought something to Keating as well.

"Here's something I think you'd be interested in," Keating said John told him. It was an early copy of *A Course in Miracles*, which John had received from Judy Skutch.

And he gave it to me, and then we started a [*Course in Miracles* study group] a little while later ... [W]e had meetings at the [television] station over lunch hours, I remember. ... I think Carolyn [Dailey, John's secretary] called me and said John wanted to start a group; and I think they asked me if I had any people to suggest; and they had some people." As far as who was in the group, Keating recalled: "There was my wife and I, and then Marian Jager ... I call her one of the 'keepers of the Light' in Kalamazoo for years. She had been doing meditation things and pendulums and all these things ... I'm sure we did some pendulum things, she and John, at the dining room table ... her grandfather was Hiram Bingham. ... [There was also] a woman named Janice Anders, a young woman who died during the course of the group ... And Sue Kemp I believe—we called her the rainbow lady. ... And then John. And Lynn Dailey was telling me Len Fouchette [was in the group as well] ... a doctor, MD. ... My memory of it is it lasted about a year, or maybe a little over a year ... I may have been the one who connected Janice

Anders ... she got ill [cancer].” Anders’ illness basically ended the group—Carolyn Dailey said there was a kind of split in the group between those who focused on a physical healing for Janice and those who wanted a ‘spiritual healing’ which the *Course* focuses on. Keating added this interesting note: “This was kind of an interesting thing. John, on a personal level—his desk was so far from the closest seat. The first time I went in his office, I thought, what does this say? I felt like he’s across this big room, you know, and I even took pictures of him where he’s at a distance ... I don’t think he was like a touchy [as in touchy-feely] person, you know, but as things progressed he got used to people hugging him, and hugging other people, and that type of thing.

So that was John Fetzer’s 1970s *Course in Miracles* group. Now back to the story that leads to Ken Killick, Lloyd Swierenga, Cleora Dailey and Chuck Spence. Keating told us:

The Initiates [in Kalamazoo] got more organized ... [W]e voted and got Lloyd [Swierenga] as president. So he was president of Les Initiates, and the local—so there was a branch in Canada and a branch here ... [W]e realized Ken [Killick] had been giving [Gaston] most of the information, so we connected to Ken directly, and he came down and taught us ... and then at one point we broke away from Gaston [that is, from the Canadian group] ... Ken [Killick] would come down and teach and—you know—like once a month he’d come from Canada and do, like, a Sunday afternoon session. John was never involved in those. ... Lloyd Swierenga was the local director of the Initiates [in Kalamazoo] then ... Lloyd was part of the Initiates before he connected to John.

As noted, Keating told us that Killick was in the original meeting in John’s office with Gaston, when Gaston asked John for money and John turned him down. But John stayed in touch with Les Initiates people, through Keating and through the Hardys, Mary and Dean, who lived in Allegan (about 40 miles northwest of Kalamazoo). Keating said:

Silva Mind Control came on the scene somewhere in the early ‘70s. I took the Silva Mind Control One and Two, the advanced class. And, in fact, Jose Silva himself came to Nazareth College and taught, I think, part of the advanced.” And that’s how Keating met the Hardys: “I think we met in the basic Silva Mind Control class ... And they had an experience where they were coming back from a drive down south and they lost a period of time they couldn’t account for—like an hour and a half—and they felt they had been taken up by UFO. They didn’t remember it, but all of a sudden they were on the road going in the same direction and an hour and a half or something had lapsed.

Soon Mary and Dean Hardy became part of the Les Initiates group. Mary Hardy is a psychic in her own right, and the Hardys built two small pyramids on their property. We interviewed the Hardys, and they said that they designed their pyramids with Killick: “We drove up to Ottawa (CN),” Mary Hardy told us, “and we sat in his basement and designed this pyramid that we’ve got there.”

And John got into the act regarding this pyramid as well, Dean Hardy told us:

And we were in the process of building it when there—we had a phone call, and he says—I don’t know who’s going to bring him out, but he says, ‘There is a gentleman from Kalamazoo that would like to talk to you.’ That was Fetzer. And he came out, and then he came out a few times after that, and it was kind of interesting. He said—when we finally got it (the pyramid) done, he came out and he says—he came up to me and he said—fingers held out—he shook hands like this. He said, ‘You’re one of the very first ones who’s ever come out, shook my hand like this and didn’t come out like this.’ Like a handout, see?

Meaning, instead of with the hand face-up, like for a handout. Mary Hardy was most impressed that John was a 33rd degree Scottish Rite Freemason, telling us, “John was a 33rd degree Mason and so was Kenneth Killick ... they have special wisdom.”

As of 2016, the Hardys are still doing an annual summer weekend event at their home (though Dean has now passed away). Larry Massie and I attended one of these weekends in the summer of 2011, that was attended by well over 100 people, probably more like 200. They are greatly concerned with “healing the planet” and particularly with the ‘spiritual energy grid,’ similar to the British ‘ley lines.’ They believe that high tension power lines and things like the Navy’s low frequency submarine communications interfere with the ‘spiritual energy grid’ and cause things like earthquakes and hurricanes. They ‘do battle’ against this interference by placing ‘spiritual energy vortices’ at various places. I mention this because when Lloyd Swierenga was Fetzer Foundation Executive Vice President in the mid 1980s (John was still President, though he was ill, so Lloyd actually ‘ran things’ with Chuck Spence as his number two person), he was greatly concerned with such things—the high tension wires and so forth ... it was an obsession for Lloyd. As a consequence, there are no above ground electrical wires near the Fetzer Institute.

As far as John and Ken Killick go, Jim Keating brought Killick’s resume to John sometime after 1977 (Keating gave us a copy of it), and the Fetzer-Killick relationship seemed to take root around 1979. Keating simply said to us, “That was about the time when Ken stepped in with John. I was not privy to some of that, a lot of that.” And gradually over the later ‘70s, the meetings between Keating and Fetzer became less frequent: “What sort of pulled me away from John is I got a new job that took me out of town, and it was very demanding ... I had to drive to Marshall (about an hour east of Kalamazoo) every day, and all of a sudden I didn’t have the time available.”

Some entries in Rhea Fetzer’s diary during this time period are of interest here:

September 15, 1979: at a restaurant in Kalamazoo, “a couple came over to talk with us. They were Jim and Ruth Keating. At one time he was on the Fetzer Foundation Board and also taught at Nazareth. He was involved in the holistic health which was supported by John’s Foundation at Western [Rhea mixed up WMU and Nazareth College here]. They are both very intelligent and interested in parapsychology.”

November 13, 1979: “Today John met with Ken Killick, a professor of parapsychology in Ottawa CN [this may well have been what John told Rhea, but Killick was not a professor, etc.] ... John went to Otsego [to the Hardys in Allegan, adjacent to Otsego] to meet him.”

November 17, 1979: “John went to the home of Jim Keating to watch the World Series and also to talk with him. He is interested in many of the same things John is.”

July 17, 1980: “Went to dinner to Mary and Dean Hardy’s on Lake Dumont ... it is near Allegan ... There was much conversation about holistic medicine ... Mr. Hardy had built two pyramids back of the house, which were interesting. They pick up ‘tachyon energy’ from outer space which energizes people who meditate inside.”

October 25, 1980: “John met with a group on parapsychology and then he took them to dinner ... I went also ... Ken Killick—a very good electrical engineer, Lloyd Swierenga, Dr. Donald Amburst, Lloyd’s fiancé [Lorraine], and Dr. Zolan [Margaret Zolan, the widow of Mike Gergely’s late law partner, and also Rhea’s doctor and a future member of the Monday Night Group].”

December 7, 1980: John and Rhea went to “Jim and Ruth Keating’s for dinner at their house. Ken Killick and Lloyd Swierenga were also there. Killick is from Canada and Lloyd is from Kalamazoo—

he is a younger man, and I think John said he is an attorney [this is incorrect—Lloyd was doing some computer work for Western Michigan University, as an outside contractor]. ... the Keatings are very courteous and interesting people.”

TB18 February 14, 1981: “...went to the wedding reception of Lloyd and Loraine Swierenga ... John knows Lloyd ... he works for a government agency [again, this is incorrect].”

By late 1980 Killick was a close personal advisor to John—as the following letter from John to Killick in November 1980 points out:

My dear Kenneth Both Lynn (Dailey) and I cannot fully express to you our sincere feelings about the beautiful tape you sent to us. You have tendered us the means by which we can musically have our morale restored, as lately seems to be so often a necessity. Your commentary and explanation are deeply touching in every respect. The style of your delivery resembles that of Maitreya [the awaited Theosophical ‘Second Coming of Christ’] ... Your generosity in offering commentary on financial investments is most appreciated ... I have had moderate investments in gold and silver ... [John goes on to lay out his investments] ... on another matter, I have identified with an exploratory program in Mexico which seemingly is dealing with fabulous amounts of gold hidden away in secret underground passages by earlier Indian tribes.¹ ... This week I had my annual physical examination with Dr. Doyle Wilson [John lays out, in detail, the results to Killick].

Massie and I (Tom Beaver) interviewed Lloyd Swierenga in August 2013, and Lloyd spoke glowingly of Killick:

He was a psychic. He also, I think, was on loan to this planet from some other planetary system, because he’d talk about his home frequently, where he had come from, and he had very good memory; and I don’t think he was making anything up. The other thing, he did give a gift to this earth. In fact, the electronics that you’re using and we’re all aware of is a direct result of him, because he was the co-patent holder of the light-emitting diode [a questionable claim].

As an interesting footnote on Killick: According to his resume, he had worked for Avro Aerospace in Canada in the 1950’s at the time it was working on the so-called “Avro car,” which was a secret American Air Force-funded “flying saucer” that was designed to go Mach 9+ (and which, according to ufologists, was reversed engineered from alien UFOs). The Avro car had stability problems at both high speed and, particularly, low speed, and was scrapped ... though its ‘flying wing’ technology eventually led to the B2 bomber.

As another footnote, I, Tom Beaver, somewhat knew Jim Keating for the 20 years I worked for Inner Light Ministries, because Jim and his wife would come to the large ILM events in the Michigan-Indiana area. I never got to know Keating in any depth, but he would mention from time to time that he and John had been friends in the 1970s. My internal reaction was always, “Yeah, right,” because that was an easy thing to say. Quite a few folks over the years had presented themselves to me as ‘old friends of John.’ And I remembered one incident in particular in the late ‘80s, when I was living with John, when Keating and his wife rang the Rhea House doorbell unannounced—I believe it was at Christmastime—and John had me politely shoo them away without letting them in ... I do

¹ Various Masons seemed to have gotten interested in ‘buried ancient treasure’ in various places; these treasures were said to be from various places, including ancient Egypt, and/or from the Knights Templars, and/or the Aztecs, you name it. Masons who invested in such searches included FDR and John Wayne. Additionally, Fetzer was quite taken with the *Life and Teachings of the Masters of the Far East* series of books, written by purported Arizona mining prospector Baird Spaulding in the 1950s.

remember that they were a little incredulous at not being let in to see John. However, as you can see, Keating was one person who was not exaggerating his connection with John.

Which brings us to Cleora Daily, a member of the early 1980s Monday Night Group (and the wife of Chuck Spence at that time). Cleora's introduction to John Fetzer was through Ken Killick as well, but Cleora was not actually in the Les Initiates group. Cleora herself tells the story in her October 5, 2011 interview with Massie and Beaver:

In 1981 I went on a trip (with a tour group) into Egypt, and it was called "Atlantis Rising." And two of the people who were on the trip lived north of here [Cleora was from Kalamazoo]. It was a Mary and Dean Hardy, as I remember their names. ... The trip, once we got over there, went bankrupt. ... So I had a little trust fund and I thought well, I can donate some money to this [to keeping the trip going]. ... Then when we came back, Dean and Mary knew about it [what Cleora had done to save the trip]. ... They told a man in Canada, a clairvoyant mystic called Ken Killick, and Ken—who was associated with John Fetzer then ... I was to meet Ken. And Ken, when he met me he said, 'I'm going to introduce you to a man I want you to meet.' And then he introduced me to John. And he said that John had a certain spiritual focus, but he had nobody to talk with about it.

This was a common misconception at the time—that John had no one to talk to about his interests ... it may well have been a story spread by John himself to certain folks.

Cleora kept up her acquaintance with the Hardys: "I used to go out there and, in fact, I built my own little pyramid." And Cleora has a recollection of talking to Killick and John Fetzer at the Hardy house as well:

I do remember when Ken and John and I were sitting together, Ken Killick said, "Well, you know, we were talking about atoms and the space between, and why not be able to just put your hand through a wall if there's all this space and everything, and you have space within your hand." And then Ken said something like, "Well, Cleora, why don't you just walk through this table?" And I said to Ken, "After you."

According to Swierenga's interview with us, it was Killick who recommended to the Hardys to build a pyramid on their property, to help their son who was autistic (supposedly, according to Mary and Dean, due to the UFO encounter). And, Swierenga insisted, Killick influenced the design of the Fetzer Administration building as well. "Kenneth had an effect on that building in talking with Mr. Fetzer," Swierenga told us. "I mean, I'm convinced of that. And some of those conversations I was—you know, I was privilege to."

And, as a final piece to this—Chuck Spence was Cleora's husband at the time Cleora met John. Cleora told us:

My husband at the time was very interested and also was open. And so that's how Chuck Spence then also was introduced to John Fetzer, because we [Cleora and Chuck] were married at the time ... Chuck got involved because Chuck—at the time John's wife was still home under 24 hour nursing care. but then she needed to go into a nursing home. And so Chuck went and visited her every day. And John was touched by Chuck's doing that, and then John and Chuck became kind of close. And then John said, "Well, I'd like you to be president of this health organization that I'm going to create." ... Chuck was getting his doctorate degree and Ken Killick, the clairvoyant, had said, when he first met me ... "Your husband is going to be busy. He's going to ... become related to a health organization."

Chuck indeed became the head person at the Fetzer Foundation for a short time before Swierenga came in and Spence was shifted to his number-two.

It was not long after this, in later 1981, that Killick was suddenly ‘banished’ as far as John Fetzer was concerned. And soon after that the Monday Night group was formed. Cleora was asked to join the group, she told us: “Kind of right at the beginning. ... we were called the Spiritual Advisory Core Council Group. Wordy. ... It was Mike Gergely ... Carolyn Daily ... Bruce Fetzer. He [John] had brought Bruce [Fetzer] into town, his nephew. And then, of course, Jim Gordon, myself, Chuck Spence, and then Elizabeth ... Sister Liz [a nun at Nazareth and teacher at Nazareth College, who got into hot water for teaching Silva Mind Control and also a course called, Parapsychology and the Bible].” Cleora here missed naming Dr. Margaret Zolan who was Rhea’s doctor and the widow of Mike Gergely’s former law partner, and missed as well regarding naming Margaret’s husband, Frank Henry. But Ken Killick was not a member of the group, because John had suddenly disassociated with him. Cleora said, “Killick was not [in the group] because of Jim Gordon ...” The issue with Killick was, according to Cleora, that, “Ken definitely wanted—he had more of an ego—he wanted to be involved” in John’s life.

And also regarding Killick, Bruce Fetzer had this to say in his October 18, 2011 interview with us: “Summer of ‘81 was the baseball strike. Ken Killick seriously embarrassed John because he got, psychically, some information for John. John went into the owners’ meeting to use that information, and it turned out to be the wrong advice. So John was kind of seething and breaking away from Killick—who also had just claimed to be Melchizedek. And so John was in the transition between Killick and Jim Gordon.” It should be noted that Jim Gordon also ‘channeled’ for John (the channelings are preserved in the Fetzer archives) some disparaging comments on Killick at the time—competition among psychics for John’s attention?

By 1984, when John had sold the Tigers and the Fetzer Foundation had its first major infusion of tens of millions of dollars, John hired Lloyd Swierenga as Executive Vice President (John himself was still President), and Chuck Spence became Vice President and Head of Programs. According to Bruce Fetzer, John hired Lloyd largely based on past life readings from Jim Gordon.

Lloyd Swierenga has a Doctorate in Education and had been working as a special assistant to the president of Western Michigan University when they were going through a building phase in the later ‘70’s, including the Fetzer Business Center. By 1984, when John hired him, Lloyd had left WMU and was doing business and tech consulting. He was also working with Ken Killick in Toronto, and was president of Les Initiates in the U.S.

Swierenga talked in his interview with us about how, from his point of view, he gradually became associated with John:

In the 1970’s ... there were a number of study groups along esoteric lines of one type or another. ... I would join—or I’d go to these groups and investigate this group and that group, so on and so forth. Well, every once in a while Mr. Fetzer would float in to one of these groups. And he was always very much in the background. People seemed to—well, they did respect him, but they seemed to just let him be who he was, you know? Didn’t make a big deal out of it. In fact, I’m sure that I attended several groups that he participated in—and he didn’t participate on a regular basis, to the best of my knowledge at that time. He’d come to this group and be there, then come over to this group and be there, and so on and so forth. ... I’ll bet you that in those meetings maybe I saw him—he’d float in—I’d see him once a year or something. I mean, I had never established a personal relationship with him, not at those

meetings. It was very interesting. I was—I had my own consulting business in organizational development and I was working down here in Kalamazoo, working with smaller companies. And one day out of the blue I get a call from Carolyn Dailey.

John hired Swierenga first to install a computer system ... and soon—evidently based upon John Gordon's 'past life recommendation,' Lloyd was Executive VP and in charge of building the Fetzer Administration building.

One other note: As stated, Swierenga was the head of the American "Les Initiates" at the time, which had the IRS status of a church (501(c)3). When I (Tom Beaver) was Treasurer of Inner Light Ministries, I had in my possession the old paperwork for Les Initiates, showing Swierenga as President and a later version of the paperwork showing John Fetzer as President, and then a letter from the IRS saying that a name-change from "Les Initiates" to "Inner Light Ministries" did not affect the legal status as "church." According to Bruce Fetzer, John was having trouble managing how to separate Jim Gordon/ILM from the Foundation (which is what Jim wanted, as did the next Fetzer Foundation President, Glenn Olds). But this was a time period where getting "church status" from the IRS was difficult. So here we have John's solution to that problem—John had gotten control of Les Initiates from Lloyd, so John simply changed its name to "Inner Light Ministries" and turned it over to Jim Gordon to run as Jim's own church. Subsequently, upon John's death, Jim Gordon officially became President of ILM, etc. And, one could say, this completed Jim's 'defeat' of Ken Killick as John's personal psychic and spiritual advisor.

Three Final Footnotes

- Interestingly enough, Jim Keating did not cross paths with either Sister Elizabeth Reis or with Cleora Daily. Evidently, Sister Liz's activities at Nazareth and with teaching Silva Mind Control began just after Keating left there. And Cleora didn't meet the Hardys and become involved in Les Initiates until 1981, after Keating's involvement with John had lessened.
- Also in the 1970s, it should be noted that John was meeting with Judy Skutch, and also meeting the people she introduced him to, such as Helen Schucman, channeler of *A Course in Miracles*; Ed Mitchell, founder of the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS); and Dr. J. Allen Hynek who worked on Project Bluebook, and so on.
- And while this was all going on, remember that in 1976 John (and Carolyn), and then Rhea, were also initiated into Transcendental Meditation, and for about two years John was quite sincere about it, meeting with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and his 'people' in both Los Angeles and in Switzerland, as well as advising them regarding their several television stations, etc.

The bottom line of this memo is as follows: The 1970s, when John was also in his '70's, were a decade of intensive metaphysical exploration by John Fetzer.